

Memo of Meeting of the Executive Committee on December 17, 1962, 10 a.m.

All members were present.

Governor Stevenson arrived somewhat later.

McCone advised that Intelligence Summaries dated 16 December on Cuba and the Congo had been distributed to members of the Committee and required no further comment. He did state, however, that the continued presence of large numbers of Soviet military personnel, organized units of ground troops and the existence of SAM sites in Soviet hands and in a high state of readiness gave him concern. He forecasted that in due time the Soviets would either take direct action against our U-2s with their SAMs or would warn us to cease overflights or accept penalty of such action. DCI urged US Government through appropriate channels to warn Soviet Government that we were prepared to take such measures as was necessary to destroy the SAM sites if the Soviets attempted to interfere with U-2 operations.

The President agreed this was a good suggestion and asked that McCloy be given instructions to communicate the US concern to Knetsov, that Thompson communicate with Dobrynin and other channels be used if necessary.

Rusk reported on the NATO meeting. Apparently, the meeting was largely perfunctory and involved an appeal by the US for the expansion of conventional forces of all NATO Allies, the problems around the control of nuclear weapons, various channels of communication to the Soviets and the most recent position of de Gaulle which was to the effect that he now felt time was approaching for a general review of the Soviet-NATO relationship.

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Dillon expressed reservations. There was an extended debate with Galbraith (?), Stevenson, McGhee and Bowles supporting the strong position line--Taylor, Rusk, Dillon and McCone urging moderation and warning against the involvement of US military forces.

The subject was discussed later at a meeting at 3:45, details of which appear below.

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The meeting adjourned until 3:45 at which time definite agreement was reached on the Congo situation under which Rusk would talk to U Thant at the UN, McGhee go to Brussels to meet with the Belgians, Williams to go to the Congo, and Defense would send a military mission to determine the military capabilities of both factions in the Congo. No decision was made to put in an air squadron. The President favored an indication to Adoula that he might be willing to do this if necessary but at the same time we must insist on sincere and earnest negotiations on Adoula's part with Tshombe.

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